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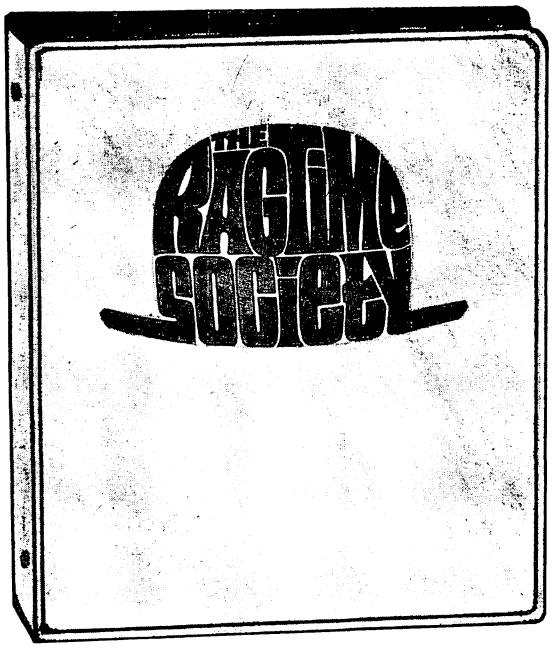
DEDICATED TO THE PRESERVATION OF CLASSICAL RAGTIME

SPECIAL OFFER

RAGTIME SOCIETY BINDER



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RAGTIME...
UNDER YOUR HAT

THE RAGTIME SOCIETY

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Well, for Ragtime's sake- here we are with another year and another BASH behind us. 'Whew' and what a BASH it was; but we'll tell you all about it a little later on. Suffice it to say that we all enjoyed ourselves all 300- yes we said 300 -of us Ragophiles.

Though no date has been set for next year's BASH (Who the heck said anything about one next year!!!) in all likelihood it will be held around the same time; so plan now- practice those rags and come prepared to participate.

In this our final issue of 1970, we are sure you will find lots of 'ragtime' reading and information. By the way, now would be an appropriate time for us all to stand and applaud those who have contributed so enthusiastically to our publication, especially, Jack Cuff, Roger Hankins and Tex Wyndham. Accept our accolades!

Many new things are in the offing for next year, so don't let your membership lag- get that renewal form filled out and sent to us before the Christmas mail slows the postal people down.

Thank you all for your support this year and remember to have a

MERRY CHRISTMAS!!!

THE RAGTIME SOCIETY is a non-profit organization for people interested in Ragtime Music. Its services include the reprinting of sheet music and the recording of Ragtime on its own record label. Membership is $5.00 per year and includes all the issues for the current year of THE RAGTIMER, which is published bi-monthly.

P. O. BOX 520 WESTON ONTARIO CANADA

SOUNDS FAMILIAR

ROGER HANKINS

THOSE BILL BAILEY SONGS

Part 2: SOUNDS AND SYMBOLS

The name Bill Bailey meant different things to various song writers. Hughie Cannon and John Queen thought of him as an ideal subject for a ragtime song. The Leighton Brothers, who specialized in folk ballads, concentrated on his folk qualities. Various imitators thought only of the pot of gold which seemed assured by the mere mention of his name. Writers in the second decade of the century found his name adaptable to the new craze for Hawaiian songs. As a general rule Bill Bailey fared pretty well at the hands of his answer men. 'I Wonder Why Bill Bailey Don't Come Home', 'Since Bill Bailey Came Back Home', and 'When Old Bill Bailey Plays the Ukalele' (sic) are all good songs.

Completely forgotten, however, are the songs which Negro ballad makers sang about the man. Also forgotten, though not completely, are the original Negro ballads about Frankie and Johnny, the Bully, and Casey Jones. What we hear today are the versions by white song writers who usually managed to destroy the original Negro flavor of these ballads. Charles Trevathan completely messed up the classic ballad structure in his song about the Bully. The tin pan alley version of Casey Jones has none of the rhythmic abandon of the Negro version. Frankie's lover is a Johnny-come-lately, her original lover being named Albert in the earthier Negro version.

The Bill Bailey songs prove the exception to the rule. Far from being pseudo Negro songs, they are thoroughly negroid in character, being steeped in Negro folklore and musical tradition. Primarily the work of one man, Hughie Cannon, a white song and dance man, ably assisted by John Queen, a white minstrel player, the Bill Bailey songs paint a vivid picture of Negro folklore as it existed at the turn of the century.

Everything about the Bill Bailey songs has an unmistakable Negro folk flavor. The classic ballad structure is found only in about a dozen or so printed songs around the turn of the century. These songs are divided evenly among Bill Bailey songs on the one hand and Negro ballads on the other. There doesn't seem to be any other early printed examples of this structure. The most obvious connection between Bill Bailey and the Negro folk ballads is found in the melody of Frankie and Johnny. James Fuld in his "Book of World Famous Music" mentions four songs that copyrighted the melody of Frankie and Johnny between 1904 and 1912, and further specifies that these four are the earliest known printed examples of the famous melody. Half of these songs, the first two to be published are Bill Bailey songs.

It seems to be more than coincidence that the most prominent letters, B and L, in Bill Bailey are also found in the few Negro ballads that employ the classic ballad structure: The Bully, the Boll Weevil, Railroad Bill, and Frankie and Albert. For that matter so does the term Folk Ballad. The name Bill Bailey is so perfect

for the particular songs which bear his name that it seems only a Negro could have coined it. Either that or else Hughie Cannon was more familiar with Negro folk traditions than they themselves were.

There are so many conflicting stories about a real Bill Bailey who was known personally by Hughie Cannon that it is tempting to forget all of them and say instead that Hughie Cannon borrowed the name from Negro ballad writers. According to James J. Geller in "Famous Songs and their stories" Bill Bailey was a lazy shiftless Negro whose wife got tired of supporting him. Geller, however, was an incurable romanticist who sometimes let his imagination run away with him. David Ewen's "American Popular Songs" Random House 1966, indentifies the real Bill Bailey as a member of the white vaudeville team of Bailey and Cowan. Ewen does add that this particular Bill Bailey denied any connection with Hughie Cannon's song. Another version, which seems to have more credibility states that Bill Bailey was the Willard 'Bill' Bailey whose picture appears on the same page as May Irwin and Jimmy Durante in the 3rd edition of "They All Played Ragtime". One of our Society's more outspoken members from the Michigan contingent claims that there is proof that Willard Bailey was in Jackson Michigan at the same time as Hughie Cannon around the turn of the century.

Even going on the assumption that this last version is true, it makes Hughie Cannon's songs all that more remarkable. How he could use the name Bill Bailey and combine it so naturally with the Negro legends built around homeless wanderers is nothing short of miraculous. The only logical assumption is that the Negroes had used a name for their homeless wanderer and this name sounded something like Bill Bailey, Bull Boley or Bold Bully or what have you. In the absence of any specific name used by the Negroes we may go on the assumption that they did use the name Bill Bailey.

A brief course in basic psychology would show that the Negroes had to sing about such an individual. The psychologist C. G. Jung has given ample evidence to show that human beings everywhere at all times have tended to humanize their strongest and most basic instincts. The concept of beauty became personalized in the imaginary figure of a Venus. Manliness and strength in a Hercules or a Paul Bunyan. The procreation of the race in a Madonna and child, etc. etc.. Jung indentifies these embodiments of basic human instincts as archetypes; Human figures, and not animals or inanimate objects. Rudi Blesh in his study of jazz "Shining Trumpets" summarizes the whole Negro experience in America as that of,'a lost race searching for a home'. This experience is most reflected in Negro music, particularly the blues. Bill Bailey or Bull Boley is one of the archetypes embodying this most fundamental instinct of the american Negro. Hughie Cannon was sharp enough to fit the name Bill Bailey into this context and carry it to its logical conclusion.

It is highly possible that there was both a real Bill Bailey known to Hughie Cannon and a fictitious archetype also called Bill Bailey. As has been mentioned there were two Bill Bailey songs which used the melody of Frankie and Johnny. Fittingly enough Hughie Cannon was the first to employ this melody in print. "He Done Me Wrong" subtitled the Death of Bill Bailey (1904). The Leighton Brothers published their version of Bill Bailey's death in 1908: "Bill, You Done Me Wrong". Both songs are almost identical in words and melody to both verse and chorus. Together with a couple of other songs they give convincing evidence that the melody of Frankie and Johnny was in the public domain, but when placed side by side they suggest that something in the name Bill Bailey was also in the public domain.

Alan Lomax has identified Bill Bailey as a Missouri ragtime song and mentions it in the same breath as Frankie and Johnny and the Bully which were sung at Babe Connor's St. Louis establishment in the early 90's. The Leighton brothers in particular were fascinated by Negro ballads and their interest in Bill Bailey most likely originated in their familiarity with the Negro ballad rather than their knowledge of Hughie Cannon's songs. The Leighton's were the ones primarily responsible for popularizing the tin pan alley version of Casey Jones. They sang it regularly as part of their highly successful vaudeville act. But they are best known today as the writers who first set down, in print, both words and music of Frankie and Johnny (1912). For years afterwards they pressed their claim as originators of this famous ballad.

The Leighton Brother's version of Frankie and Johnny was influenced in large part by their Bill Bailey song of four years earlier "Bill You Done Me Wrong". Perhaps they didn't want the two songs to sound exactly alike to their audiences. The famous tag line 'He was her man but he done her wrong' which is so prominent in their Bill Bailey song is omitted entirely in their version of Frankie and Johnny. The only reference to doing wrong is made by Frankie. She begs Johnny not to leave 'home' and admits that she has done him wrong.
At this point the Leighton version of Frankie and Johnny sounds like the traditional version of Bill Bailey in much the same fashion as their Bill Bailey song sounds like Frankie and Johnny. The mood of the song suddenly changes then Johnny admits he has another love. Frankie, who just happens to be carrying a forty four gun (It was a bear, a large affair) immediately goes into her Rooty-Toot-Toot routine, and the Leighton version ends with a 16 bar chorus, replete with much weeping and wailing, and all around general histrionics, great for a vaudeville act, but hard on a supposedly impersonal ballad.

The main difference between the Leighton's Bill Bailey song and Hughie Cannon's last Bill Bailey song is in the circumstances of Bill's death. The Leightons have him crushed to death between two railway cars. Otherwise the two songs are practically identical, although the Leighton's lyrics are more suggestive of Frankie and Johnny. The Leightons were railroads buffs and this explains their interest in both Bill Bailey and Casey Jones. They also wrote an original ballad of their own "Steamboat Bill" which was based loosely on the Casey Jones model. This ballad ends with Steamboat 's widow promising her children she'll marry a railroad man next time.

The two death songs of Bill Bailey point up the flexibility of the Frankie and Johnny melody. It wasn't until the 1920's when Frankie and Johnny were adopted by the college crowd that this melody became identified exclusively with Frankie and her man. At the turn of the century the melody was open to all comers with apparent emphasis on the 'Done Wrong" type of song.

Bill Bailey's connection with Negro ballads in general and Frankie and Johnny in particular was the result of the interest his principal writers took in these song forms. But there are many other Negro elements in these songs particularly in those of Hughie Cannon. As a matter of fact there are so many Negro elements that one is tempted to credit them to traditional Negro sources, and give Hughie Cannon credit for merely assembling them. This wouldn't be the first instance where a writer wrote such a convincing folk

song that people doubt that he originated it. Joseph M. Daly, the publisher of Joplin's 'Rose Leaf Rag" wrote Chicken Reel in 1910 which everybody accepts as a traditional folk song, although as James Fuld admits, nobody can find any evidence of the song existing before Daly copyrighted it.

Cannon did such a superb job of setting Bill Bailey's adventures to music that it is hard not to believe that Bill is the archetype of the traditional Negro wanderer searching for his lost home. Consider the letter B. The Negro singers have a preference for bouncy consonant beginnings and frequently use them as a sort of musical extension of everyday speech: Be-Bop, Black Bottom, Barrelhouse, Breakdown, Boogie-Woogie, Blues, etc. . Frequently a Negro folk singer will change certain words to conform to specific consonant sounds he prefers. A wanderer does not return home. He comes back home. A fugitive from justice is not an outlaw but a bad man. Aunt Jemima doesn't wear a kerchief but a bandanna. Dem Bones is more suitable to sung speech than any term a scientist can invent. Guitars, Pianos, Organs are all known as a Box. It goes a little against the grain to hear the Negro ballad of John Henry the C & O Workman and compare it with a white ballad about Bill Bailey a B & O Brakeman. As if this weren't enough there is the matter of the railroad occupation as symbolizing the wanderer searching for a home. Symbolic language is much beloved by the Negro and it is much easier to believe that B & O Brakeman was a Negro expression ratherthan a term coined by Hughie Cannon.

The letter B is frequently used in symbolic sense by the Negro as witness the modern phrase 'Black is Beautiful'. Br'er Rabbit, as everyone knows, is really the elusive figure of the Negro outsmarting his enemies. The Boll Weevil is generally recognized as being another symbolic figure of the Negro resisting all attempts to destroy him. The Bully may legitimately be compared to the figure of the white oppressor.

Frequently the Negro will use animal symbols. A classic Blues song of the 20's "Black Dog Blues" refers to the singer's rival who is trying to steal her man.

This love of symbolism is intimately bound up with the tendency of the Negro towards indirectness. Avoiding the obvious has always been considered a virtue among blacks, and this is a partial explanation of why their singers naturally tend to slide around a certain musical note rather than hitting the note dead center. It must be admitted that animal symbols have always been used in fables everywhere, and black birds and black cats are common every day symbols, but symbolic language tends to be more of an art with the Negro than with anybody else.

Bert Williams had a smash hit in 1907 with a song called "Bon Bon Buddy" (the chocolate drop). Buddy's only interest in life is his name and this name is the envy of all his peers. Buddy was a source of amusement of white audiences but it is easy to see the image of the black individual underneath the surface. Bon Bon Buddy was the hit of the musical production "Bandana Land".

The title song opens with the challenging statement "In Bandana Land, there we'll take our stand". The symbolism inherent in the title song suggests a similar veiled meaning behind the repeated B's in Bon Bon Buddy. Interestingly enough these repeated B's are only found in human symbolic figures, not the animal types.

Clarence Williams wrote a musical play for an all Negro cast in 1927 called 'Bottomland' which contained such numbers as "I'm going to take my Bimbo back to Bambo'and "Come on Home". I guess there isn't any rule that the language itself has to make sense. The symbolism in Bandana is hard to pin down. It could be a badge of honour. John Henry's trademark was a brightly colored bandana. On the other hand it could symbolize freedom as seen in the headgear of a gypsy or the travelling bag of a hobo.

Our own Eubie Blake and his partner Noble Sissle wrote about Bandana Days, but they speak of it in the past tense, as days that used to be. Blake and Sissle also wrote "Daddy won't you please come home" which calls to mind both "Baby won't you please come home" and "Bill Bailey won't you please come home". The obvious popularity of this phrase among Negro song writers encourages the thought that Hughie Cannon heard it from other Negro song or ballad writers. Baby is another popular term among Negroes. By coincidence it does feature in some early variants of the Frankie and Johnny melody such as "Baby in a Guinea Blue Gown" and "You're My Baby".

The letter B is of interest in the Bill Bailey songs both as a sound and as a symbol. Another popular sound with Negro singers would be humming sounds associated with moaning and groaning, and represented by such letters as M, N, and NG. The Bill Bailey songs are particularly noteworthy for these humming sounds: Rain, shame, come home, done wrong, etc.. They may not be up to the standards of a W. C. Handy's "Long Gone John From Bowling Green" but they are pretty well up there nonetheless. The perfect Negro sound would combine B's and humming sounds. The favorite nickname applied to ballad singers is 'Blind' necessitated by the fact that so many of them were indeed blind. Blindness and retentive memories go hand in hand, but no substitute nickname has ever been developed. Why mess around with a perfect sound?

These traditional Negro sounds represent Bill Bailey's connection with early Negro folk music, but there are many other Negro elements in Hughie Cannon's songs. Many of these may be considered traditional in the modern sense in that they didn't gain general acceptance till around 1920. Judged in this light the Bill Bailey songs are not mere turn of the century curiosities but genuine trail blazers which were a full generation ahead of their time.

NEXT: PART 3 - TRANSITION SONGS

CATALOGUE NOTICE:

RE: CM-600- Weeping Willow Rag
CM-601- Gladiolus Rag
CM-603- Pineapple Rag
CM-606- Euphonic Sounds

This sheet music is no longer available to us and we ask you to please strike it from your catalogue listings.

"BILL YOU DONE ME WRONG."

By
LEIGHTON & LEIGHTON.

INTRO
Allegro moderato.

ff
When ev-er da wind am a blowin,
Bil-ly was killed up-on the railroad,
Bill had a migh-ty sad Fu-ner-al,
VAMP
mf
mf
dat am the time that I sigh, for that kind of weath-er re-
break-in up on the Big Four, One night he stepped in to make a
Friends were all gath-ered a-round, Bells were a tol-lin, for

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minds me, Of the night that Bill Bai - - ly died, He was my
coup - lin, Cars bumped Bill was ___ no more, He was my
Will - iam, When they low-ered him in ___ de ground, He was my
man, ___ but he done me wrong. ___
man, ___ but he done me wrong. ___
man, ___ but he done me wrong. ___
Bil - ly was migh - ty con - gen - ial, A man with a lib - er - al
Send for your rub - ber ti - red hears-es, Go get your rub - ber tired
Af - ter the fu - ner - al was ov - er, Oh Lord how I did

mind, With all my heart I for - give him,
hacks, Man-y the time has Bil - ly left me,
rave, To know that poor Will - iam was bur - ried,
He was so good and kind, He was my man,
This time he'll nev - er come back, He was my man,
Down in a Pot - ters' grave, He was my man,
but he done me wrong. Oh
but he done me wrong. Oh
but he done me wrong. Oh

CHORUS.

Bill you done me wrong, And throw'd me in the worst of cir - cum-stan - ces,
I took some aw-ful chances, Bill you done me, Bill you done me wrong;
I feel so bad since you are dead and gone, De Lord have mer - cy on you,
poco
rall
de Lord have mercy on you, Love you William, bless you Bill, You done me wrong.
rit. poco
rall

THE RAGTIME SOCIETY BASH

Saturday, the 24th day of October, was a day and night of Ragtime Magic at Glendon College of York University where The Ragtime Society held its 1970 "Bash".

Advance registrations rose to the level of "crisis" proportions. For the first time in the history of The Society's annual parties it became necessary, regretfully, to refuse acceptance of many late applications. The sellout situation resulted in an attendance record of more than 300 and reached the permissable top limit of the larger facilities arranged for this year's Bash.

The massive attendance was accompanied by the largest turnout of accomplished performing talent The Society has ever experienced.

The event must be described as an unqualified success. The whole spectrum of ragtime music was performed with a rich overlay of the best from the "Classic Ragtime" era.

Much ragtime was played in its authentic form and in traditional Missouri style. In addition, the ragtime style of the great stride pianists of the eastern U. S. was frequently demonstrated including the playing of one of the originators in the person of Eubie Blake. Then too, the early forms of New Orleans music including compositions by Jelly Roll Morton received occasional attention as did the work of W. C. Handy. Even the old "Buffet Flat" and "Rent party" - Pitchin the Boogie sound was not overlooked.

Of equal importance to the preservation of Classic Ragtime was the noticeable attention being paid to ragtime as a musical form in the compositions of today's ragtimers. Many of the pianists present performed their own compositions. "Aboriginal Ambitions" by 15 year old Gordon Sheard of Toronto represents the youngest composer. The enthusiasm with which composing efforts of several performers was received is a heart warming indication of the viable nature of ragtime music.

The Newspaper and television coverage of the event took on an almost awestruck tone in expressing wonder at the swelling present day interest in ragtime by so many. The headline of Alistair Lawrie's report in the Toronto Globe and Mail read "RAGTIME DEAD? OVERFLOW AT ANNUAL BASH DEFIES CLAIM" and in the Toronto Telegram, Peter Goddard's column carried the heading "RAGTIME LIVES - AND 400 MAKE YOU KNOW THE REASON".

But for many of our members a yearly attendance at the Bash is prevented by problems of distance, time and cost. The next best answer is to describe as best we can some of the happenings. The Society's executive is always delighted to find that some of our distant members are able to be with us each year. This year Peter Harrison flew in from Kent, England for the bash. His performances on the piano and his clarinet drew him into active participation. While Peter travelled the greatest distance, we also welcomed many former and new visitors from the United States and other parts of Canada. Our local members were out in great strength bringing their own guests on the limited basis that became necessary.

Tex Wyndham from Pennsylvania, The Society's record reviewer in "The Ragtimer" publication, did a sparkling job as Master of Ceromonies. It was in no small measure due to his competent management that a constant flow of entertainment was heard throughout the afternoon and evening.

As each performer moved in, there was no saving of the best until later. Because of the long list of graciously willing talent there was no time for second appearances. As a result one performer after another used the best of his repertoire and the performing standards set, posed a well met but continuous challenge to those who followed. In turn it produced a listening joy that held the audience riveted for long hours with the kind of rapt attention that just has to be unprecedented.

Little time was available for socializing other than during the dinner period 7. 00 p. m. to 8. 15 and after the time of 11. 30 p. m. was reached. All told, close to 100 different musical compositions were performed. There was almost no repetition. By summarization it is possible to give an abbreviated version of the party proceedings.

In the pre-dinner period performers included Tex Wyndham who opened the program at about 4. 15 p. m. with Mississippi Rag. Then followed Merrywilliam Newland (Maple Leaf Rag), Peter Harrison (Sunburst), Jeff Grossman (Excelsior, Pineapple), Roger Hankins (Minnehaha Rag, Diplomat Rag), Jack Cuff (Crabapples, Sensation), Tex Wyndham (St. Louis Tickle, Grace and Beauty, Possum and Taters) Dave Flowitt (Kansas City Stomp, Snowy Morning, Boll Weevil Blues) Gale Foehner (Brun Campbell Rag, Calliope, Pickles and Peppers), Bob Boury (played his own compositions, Stroller In Air, A Tristan Two-step, Homage to Jessie James).

As the last rousing event prior to dinner Henry Cuesta, (formerly with Jack Teagarden) on clarinet was accompanied on piano by John Arpin in a breath taking performance (Yellow Dog, at the Jazz Band Ball, Eubie Blake's Memories of You, Wolverine Blues),.

At the close of the dinner period activities resumed with the forming of a well-received ad hoc ragtime band. The performance was replete with solo choruses and appropriate vocals. Personnel consisted of Mike Montgomery Piano, Bud Taylor tuba, Mike Schwimmer washboard, along with the already named Tex Wyndham Cornet, Peter Harrison clarinet, and Gale Foehner Banjo (Sweet Georgia Brown, Tin Roof Blues, Dr. Jazz, I've Found a New Baby.)

Then came more ragtime piano. David Jasen played his own compositions "Raymond Rag" also (Charleston Rag by Eubie Blake, "Brandon Bounce" by England's Neville Dickie, and Peacherine). Bill Albright played his own compositions (including Sleight of Hand, Brass Knuckles, Meat Loaf Blues with vocal in behalf of his absent collaborator.)

An ever welcome moment arrived with The Annual Bash appearance "on stage" of Eubie Blake. He was accorded a thunderous and standing ovation for his ea gerly awaited contribution to the party. (Scarf Dance, Stars and Stripes. You Do Something to Me, Pilgrims' Chorus from Tannhauser by Wagner, You're Lucky to Me, and his immortal Memories of You.) Eubie's subtle use of ragtime in his interpretations and arrangements of Music from other classical forms is always in good taste. At the conclusion of his performance, Marion Blake, his charming wife, was presented with a personal gift in behalf of The Ragtime Society as a small memento of the occasion.

Eubie added a sentimental touch by using the prerogative of age, The oldest ragtimer present to recall two 15 year old Toronto Ragtimers David Fleury and Gordon Sheard for a two piano performance (King Porter Stomp, Maple Leaf Rag).

John Arpin was then urged into a performance at the piano. His effort was as usual - impeccable (Ragtime Nightingale, his own composition Toronto Blues, and a fun-creating vocal and piano rendition of When Ragtime Rosie Ragged the Ro sary)

Earlier in the evening John Arpin had d elivered a short speech in his official capacity as head of The Ragtime Society. It is ten years ago that the world lost the last of the "big three" classic ragtime composers in the death of Joseph Lamb in the year 1960. It had been arranged that his widow Amelia Lamb would be present. Although an unexpected turn in health did not permit her to attend, John eulogized Joe Lamb and his contribution to ragtime. John also welcomed the large gathering. He expressed the feeling of reward that comes, to himself and those who work with him, from the gratifying response to The Society's efforts as reflected by the enthusiastic and overwhelming attendance.

Next came Charlie Rasch, piano and "Sister Kate" Ross, banjo as a Michigan delegation (Choo-Choo, Messin' Around, T hat Lindy Hop). After applause, a secondary wave kept Charlie at the piano for some solo work (Chevy Chase by Eubie Blake, Honky Tonky, Casa Loma Stomp).

Trebor Tichenor, piano and Betty Redelsheimer, washboard as the St. Louis contingent figuratively answered with (Shake That Thing, Frankie and Johnny). Again double applause kept Trebor on the stand for a fascinating solo performance of ragtime styles (his own composition It's a Long Way Back Home, Georgia Grind, Essay in Ragtime, Naked Dance).

Finally and in top form "Spider" Bob Seeley brought the walls down with his overflowing deluge of "rent party" piano, (Chicago Flyer, Yancey Special, St. Louis Blues, Honky Tonk Train).

The record bar did a brisk business in the sale of records of some of the earlier performers (Trebor Tichenor, Charlie Rasch, David Jasen, John Arpin and Eubie Blake). The autograph collectors never had it better.

The afterglow session was still a music filled social period that ended reluctantly with the repeated "lights out" signals of the friendly but exhausted university personnel.

Once again the thorough work of preparation done by Anne Arpin and Baron McCormick in particular (conveners), the Aldreds (publicity and task support), the Cuffs (entertainment and records) The Fairheads (Registration and reception), The MacInnes' (decorations), and John Arpin (liaison) resulted in setting the stage for a Bash that went beyond all reasonable expectations. A sincere and well earned "thank you" goes from The Ragtime Society to all those not mentioned, and there were many, who helped the executive so willingly before and during the party in the necessary work functions behind the best "Bash" ever.

The next Bash will have a tough time ahead to come up with fresh laurels!

FOR YOUR INFORMATION

Two societies with interests similar to those of THE RAGTIME SOCIETY have been brought to our attention. Perhaps you might be interested in writing to them to learn more about their activities.

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RECORD REVIEW

by TEX WYNDHAM

Sounds LP 1201 'Piano Roll Ragtime'

Selections: States Rag Medley No. 8, St. Louis Rag, Maple Leaf Rag, Possum and Taters, Jungle Time, Grace and Beauty, Stop Time Rag, Pineapple Rag-Euphonic Sounds (double roll), Cascades, Pickles And Peppers, Something Doing, Red Pepper Rag, Powder Rag, Kismet Rag.

Sounds LP 1202 'Piano Roll Hall of Fame' (hand-played piano rolls)

Selections; Grandpa's Spells, played by - Jelly Roll Morton; Papa De Da Da - Clarence Williams; Cow Cow Blues - Charles Davenport; Do It Mr. So -and-So Thomas Waller; King of The Zulu Blues - Richard M. Jones; Black Bottom Dance - James P. Johnson; Mama's Gone Good-Bye - Steve J. Lewis; Gulf Coast Blues - Clarence Johnson; Struttin' At The Strutter's Ball - Sam Williams; Jackass Blues - Teddy Weatherford; You've Gotta See Mamma Every Night - Clarence M. Jones: Mr. Freddie Blues - Jimmy Blythe; If I Could Be With You - James.P. Johnson & Thomas Waller (duet roll)

Available from Sound Records, 1349 Carmen Drive, Glendale, California 91207.

It's a little difficult to think of something to say about LP's of piano rolls. After all, one can't really 'review' a 'performance' by a player piano, and in any event, we all know what piano rolls sound like. However, as most ragtimers enjoy piano roll music, and because piano roll LPs are almost as hard to find as Buddy Bolden cylinders, it seems worthwhile to spend a few words describing these two LPs - particularly because there is so much on them of obvious interest to ragtime fans.

I must confess that I do not have a copy of Sounds 1201 to review because, from the titles listed, I have assumed that it is a reissue of piano roll material that appeared on the Riverside label, mostly on now-deleted RLP 12-110 and 12 126. I am using that material for the review, in any event, and if I am wrong, I feel sure that I'll find out about it.

The rolls on this LP are well recorded, though to my ear, they are played just a little bit too fast. Riverside claimed that many of them were hand-played, but they also sound a little too mechanical for that - although the speed may contribute to the mechanical sound.

Nevertheless, I find these sides delightful. To begin with, they comprise the only available recordings, to my knowledge, of some of the best material in the ragtime repertoire. 'Powder Rag' plays as if it were written for a piano roll performance, and

'Jungle Time' is a neglected gem. In fact, the whole program is a ragtime feast - a generous helping of Joplin, with side dishes by Scott, Turpin, Hunter, and some excellent -but-lesser-known composers as well.

To complement the fine selection of tunes on 1201, 1202 shows up with as good a selection of performers on hand-played rolls. Morton, Waller, Johnson, Blythe and many other first-class pianists are on hand to delight you ragtimers. Despite the fact that hand-played rolls often do not generate the subtletiesthat are evident in recordings by the same performers, I find a 'presence' in a hand played roll that is strangely affecting. Standing next to a player piano watching the keys move to a roll hand-played by, say, Fats Waller, is an experience that can truly evoke the shades of the old days, even with an allowance for the machinery involved in the re-creation. One can get a somewhat similar feeling listening to recordings of these hand-played rolls, their crisp, ringing sound free of the surface noise and limited fidelity that often characterized most of the recordings by these people.

But 1202 is not just for sentimentalists. As you can see, it is chock full of good tunes, and the performances are right up to par.

My experience with piano roll Lps is that they don't stay on the market too long. You won't find many that are as good as these, so if piano rolls are your fare, I'd suggest you make your move. And if they're not your fare, but you like ragtime, I think you'll find one of these worthwhile - you may wind up picking up the other one, too.

NEW

RARE PIANO ROLLS ON RECORD

THE RAGTIME SOCIETY has available a limited stock of the following records on the BIOGRAPH label.

All these recordings are top quality and are highly recommended for your library. They contain many piano roll solos previously unrecorded.

PRICE $6.00 each - ppd.

BLP -1001 Q - PARLOR PIANO 1917 - 1927
- various artists, including Waller, Johnson, Luckey Roberts, etc.

BLP - 1002 Q - THOMAS 'FATS' WALLER 1923- 24

BLP - 1003 Q - JAMES P. JOHNSON 1917 -21

BLP - 1004 Q - 'JELLY ROLL' MORTON 1924-26

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BLACKBIRD - ROSE ON PIANO ALSO at $6.00 ppd.

C 12007 - Wally Rose plays 10 classic rags for your listening pleasure

SOMETHING DOING...

JOHN ARPIN	- at Mr. Tony's Place, 9. 00 p. m. to 1. 00 a. m. in Toronto
BOB DURST	- Robinson's Restaurant, Covington, Kentucky to Dec. 31
GALE FOEHNER	- Last Chance Saloon , Rochester
KEN MAHERCY	- "Ragtime $ Bill" at the Inn, Steamboat Springs, Colo.
MIKE MONTGOMERY	- The Dakota Inn, Rathskeller, Detroit, Fri. Nights
MAX MORATH	- on the road with his show "At The Turn Of The Century"
LOWELL SCHREYER	- at Michael's Gay 90's Restaurant, Mankato Minn. Saturdays
TREBOR TICHENOR	- and the Saint Louis Ragtimers can be heard on The Goldenrod Showboat in St. Louis , Missouri
PETER TURNER	- at The Bird Cage, Cambridge, England
TEX WYNDHAM	- and The Red Lion Jazz Band, at The Surry Restaurant 1100 Philadelphia Pike, Wilmington, Del.

Performers, please keep us up to date on your engagement schedule for this column.

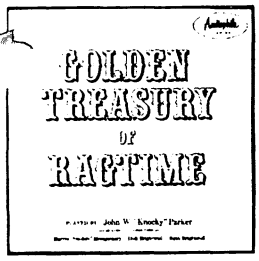
At Christmas time we realize more than ever how much our Friends both old and new have meant to us through the year, and more than ever there is a special meaning in these Wishes...

Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year

Stereo Not Available

The Golden Treasury of Ragtime featuring John W. (Knocky) Parker

AP-89 Mono



Rastus on Parade, Georgia Camp Meeting, Tickled to Death, Ma Ragtime Baby, Scandalous Thompson, Smokey Mokes, Dusty Dudes — Cakewalk, A Bunch of Blackberries, Whistlin' Rufus, Whittlin' Remus, A Coon Band Concert, Prancing Pickaninnies, Creole Belles, That Mobile Prance, Possum and 'Taters, Double Fudge (from the year 1895 through 1901).

Stereo Not Available

The Golden Treasury of Ragtime featuring John W. (Knocky) Parker

AP-90 Mono

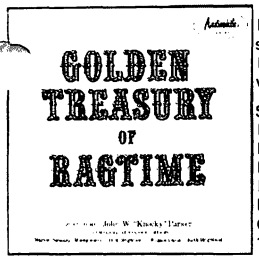
Knocky Parker (Piano, Celeste and Harpsichord), Smokey Montgomery (Banjo), Ruth Brightwell (Brushes), Dick Brightwell (Ball Viol), Willson Davis (Tuba).

St. Louis Rag, Hiawatha, St. Louis Tickle, Tennessee Tantalizer, Florida Rag, Coon Band Parade, Kinklets, Iola, Holy Moses, The Smiler, Red Wing, Missouri Rag, Virginia Rag, Wild Cherries (from 1902 through 1908).

Stereo Not Available

The Golden Treasury of Ragtime featuring John W. (Knocky) Parker

AP-92 Mono



Knocky Parker (Piano, Celeste and Harpsichord), Smokey Montgomery (Banjo), Ruth Brightwell (Brushes), Dick Brightwell (Bass Viol), Willson Davis (Tuba).

Silver Bell, Live Wires, Chatterbox Rag, Honeysuckle Rag, Tar Babies, Minstrel Man, Cum Bac Rag, Winter Garden Rag, Horse Shoe Rag, Hyacinth Rag, Red Rambler, Black Diamond Rag, Slippery Elm Rag, Red Onion Rag, Elephant Rag, Crazy Bone Rag (from 1909 through 1913).

Stereo Not Available

THE COMPLETE PIANO WORKS OF SCOTT JOPLIN*

AP-71/72 Mono

John W. (Knocky) Parker — Piano Solos — 2 12" records. (Single-instrument recording is not benefited by stereo treatment). Scott Joplin was born in Texarkana, Texas, in 1868. To Joplin belongs the prestige of being the originator of the "new sound" in music, circa 1880. His compositions, while individualistically flavored, incorporate the basic flow of native American Negro music. It is a rare and sophisticated blend and can be played well by only a few talented virtuosos.

Knocky Parker plays ragtime in the "purist" manner — both this album as well as AP-76/77 are played in the tempos in which they were intended — not racehorse fast. Everywhere on the old ragtime music is noted, "Not to be played fast." We like the easy flow of this music from the fingers of Knocky Parker, and we think you will too.

$6.00 per record (postpaid).
From: The Ragtime Society,
P.O. Box 520, Weston, Ontario

Distributed in Canada by:
Coda Publications

Stereo Not Available

OLD RAGS*

AP-49 Mono

(Single-instrument performance such as this is not benefited by stereo treatment.)

Piano solos by John W. (Knocky) Parker. Played on a concert grand Boesendorfer at Carroll College, Waukesha, Wisconsin. Whistlin' Rufus, Climax, The Pearls, Daintiness, Bond Street, Fig Leaf, Euphonic Sounds, Mr. Joe, Alligator Crawl, Georgia Camp Meeting, Frog Legs, Wild Flower.

AP-75 Stereo

ST. LOUIS RAGTIMERS*

Don Franz (Tuba), Al Stricker (Banjo), Bill Mason (Trumpet), Trebor Tichenor (Piano), Ed Freund (Drums). A lively group of pieces done by a lively gang! Shake That Thing, Lulu White, Sailing Down the Chesapeake Bay, Up Jumped the Devil, Mahogany Hall Stomp, Steamboat Stomp, King Chanticleer, Waiting for the Robert E. Lee, Gatemouth, Canal Street Blues, Ice Cream, Maple Leaf Rag (piano solo), Chattanooga Stomp, Gut Bucket Blues.

Stereo Not Available

THE COMPLETE PIANO WORKS OF JAMES SCOTT*

AP-76/77 Mono

(Single-instrument performance such as this is not benefited by stereo treatment.) John W. (Knocky) Parker — piano solos — 2 12" records. James Scott was born in Neosho, Missouri, in 1886 and is known as the second-greatest ragtime composer — second only to Scott Joplin. James Scott received piano lessons in his early years in Neosho where he quickly learned to play by ear. He had that unusual gift — a sense of absolute pitch. The moving vigor and brilliance in Scott's compositions are brought out by Knocky Parker in his interpretations of them. A Steinway grand piano was used for these recordings.

AP-81 Stereo

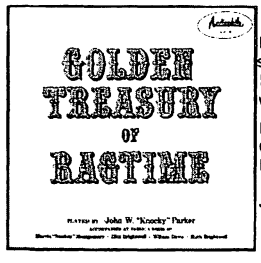
THE ST. LOUIS RAGTIMERS*

Don Franz (Tuba), Al Stricker (Banjo and Vocal), Bill Mason (Trumpet), Trebor Tichenor (Piano). In this record the St. Louis Ragtimers play an encore to their previous issue — with gusto! A fine, moving performance with unusually good audio. Cakewalking Babies From Home, Riverside Blues, Georgia Swing, Moving Day, Black Mountain Rag, Dead Man Blues, Chestnut Valley Rag (piano solo), Bye and Bye, I Ain't Rough, Tanktown Bump, When Ragtime Rosy Ragged the Rosary, Bucksnort Stomp, Ely Green's Cakewalk, They Gotta Quit Kickin' My Dawg Around.

Stereo Not Available

The Golden Treasury of Ragtime featuring John W. (Knocky) Parker

AP-91 Mono



Knocky Parker (Piano, Celeste and Harpsichord), Smokey Montgomery (Banjo), Ruth Brightwell (Brushes), Dick Brightwell (Bass Viol), Willson Davis (Tuba).

Dusty, The Peach, Ham and - - -, Hot Chocolate, Poison Ivy Rag, The Thiller, Kalamity Kid, Porcupine Rag, Sappho Rag, Darky Todale, Rose Wood, Apple Jack, Pork and Beans, Vanity Rag, Wiggle Rag (from 1908 through 1909).